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DIRECTORATE OF  
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# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

State Department review completed

**Top Secret**

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23 November 1968

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Approved For Release 2003/10/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A012600060002-4

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**[ Venezuela-Cuba:** The Venezuelan Government is defending its seizure of the Cuban fishing boat on Wednesday as a necessary precaution against any Cuban-backed effort to disrupt the elections scheduled for 1 December.

President Leoni told Ambassador Bernbaum on Thursday that he had information that local Communists, presumably with Cuban support, were intending to spark disturbances in Caracas in connection with the election. He said that Fidel Castro has now been put on notice that Venezuela will react strongly against Cuban efforts to interfere in Venezuela.

The Venezuelans are interrogating the crewmen of the Cuban boat, but as yet there is no confirmation of press reports that they have found evidence that the boat had been sent on a subversive mission against Venezuela.

Havana, for its part, has not only made demarches through the Swiss Embassy and the United Nations, but has warned that it "will not be responsible for the consequences" if the trawler and its crew are not immediately released. Havana's propaganda also charged that Venezuela would not have acted "without the support, approval, and even the decision of the US Government."

These statements reflect a sense of frustration and impotence; Havana's ability to retaliate is extremely limited. Cuban action could take the form of hijacking or forcing down one or more of the 24 Venezuelan flights that pass through Cuban air corridors each week.

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Approved For Release 2003/10/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A012600060002-4

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